SENATE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE STATEMENT OF GENERAL DAVID H. PETRAEUS, U.S. ARMY, COMMANDER U.S. CENTRAL COMMAND BEFORE THE SENATE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE ON THE AFGHANISTAN-PAKISTAN STRATEGIC REVIEW AND THE POSTURE OF U.S. CENTRAL COMMAND
01 APR 2009

The United States Central Command (CENTCOM) is now in its eighth consecutive year of combat
operations in an area of the world critical to the interests of the United States, its allies, and its partners. CENTCOM seeks to promote cooperation, to respond to crises, to deter aggression, and, when necessary, to defeat our adversaries in order to promote security, stability, and prosperity in the CENTCOM Area of Responsibility (AOR). Typically, achieving US national goals and objectives in the CENTCOM AOR involves more than just the traditional application of military power. In many cases, a whole of government approach is required, one that integrates all tools available international and interagency partners to secure host-nation populations, to conduct comprehensive counterinsurgency and security operations, to help reform, and in some cases build, governmental and institutional capacity, and to promote economic development.

These are challenging missions, and the conditions and dynamics shaping the region's security environment are constantly evolving. Major changes in just this past year include: increased violence in Afghanistan and Pakistan; transition of authority to elected civilian leadership in Pakistan; progress against extremists in Iraq; expiration of UN Security Council Resolution 1790; damage to still resilient Al Qaeda and other extremist elements; continued Iranian intransigence over its nuclear program and continued support to proxy extremist elements; increased piracy in the Gulf of Aden and off the coast of Somalia; and the global financial crisis and accompanying decline in oil prices. These developments, as well as recent events on the borders of our AOR, particularly in Gaza, India, and Somalia, demonstrate that the dynamics shaping regional security will continue to evolve, presenting both challenges and opportunities as we seek to address insecurity and extremism in the AOR.

Following conversations with our coalition partners and a recent comprehensive review of our AOR by members of CENTCOM, interagency partners, and academic experts, we have identified the following priority tasks for the coming year:

• Helping to reverse the downward cycles of violence in Afghanistan and Pakistan;

• Countering transnational terrorist and extremist organizations that threaten the

security of the United States and our allies;

• Helping our Iraqi partners build on the progress in their country while reducing US forces there but sustaining hard-won security gains;

• Countering malign Iranian activities and policies;

• Bolstering the capabilities of partner security forces in the region;

• Working with our partners to counter piracy, illegal narcotics trafficking, arms smuggling, and proliferation of the components of weapons of mass destruction;

• Working with the US military services to reduce the strain on our forces and the cost of our operations; and

• Supporting new policy initiatives, such as the establishment of the Special Representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan and efforts to reinvigorate the Middle East Peace Process.

The intent of the remainder of this Posture Statement is to address these priorities and the broader, long-term solutions they support by providing a more detailed overview of the AOR, assessments of the situation in each of its major sub-regions, brief descriptions of the approaches and techniques for improving security and preserving our national interests, and comments on the programs and systems needed to implement and to support these approaches.

II. Overview of the CENTCOM AOR

A. Nature of the AOR
The lands and waters of the CENTCOM AOR span several critical and distinctregions. Stretching across more than 4.6 million square miles and 20 countries, the AOR contains vital transportation and trade routes, including the Red Sea, the Northern Indian Ocean, and the Arabian Gulf, as well as strategic maritime choke points at the Suez Canal,the Bab el Mandeb, and the Strait of Hormuz. (With the establishment of the US Africa Command (AFRICOM) and the realignment of the Unified Command Plan, on 1 October 2008, AFRICOM assumed responsibility for US operations in the six countries of the Horn of Africa and the Seychelles, countries previously in the CENTCOM AOR.) The CENTCOM AOR encompasses the world's most energy-rich region, with the Arabian Gulf region and Central Asia together accounting for at least 64 percent of the world'spetroleum reserves, 34 percent of its crude oil production, and 46 percent of its natural gas reserves.

Social, political, and economic conditions vary greatly throughout the region. The region is home to some of the world's wealthiest and poorest states, with per capita incomes ranging from $800 to over $100,000. Despite scattered pockets of affluence, many of the more than 530 million people living in the AOR suffer from inadequate governance, underdeveloped civil institutions, unsettling corruption, and high unemployment.

As a result of this diversity, many people in the AOR struggle to balance modern influences with traditional social and cultural authorities and to manage change at a pace that reinforces stability rather than erodes it. For the past century, the sub-regions of the AOR have been torn by conflict as new states and old societies have struggled to erect a new order in the wake of the collapse of traditional empires. These conflicts have intensified in the past three decades with the emergence of extremist movements, nuclear weapons, and enormous wealth derived from oil. And today we see stability in the AOR threatened by inter-state tensions, proliferation of ballistic missile and nuclear weapons expertise, ethno-sectarian violence, and insurgencies and sub-state militias, as well as horrific acts of terrorism and extremist violence.

B. Most Significant Threats to US Interests
The most serious threats to the United States, its allies, and its interests in the CENTCOM AOR lie at the nexus of transnational extremists, hostile states, and weapons of mass destruction. Across the AOR, Al Qaeda and its extremist allies are fueling insurgency to reduce US influence and to destabilize the existing political, social, and economic order. Meanwhile, some countries in the AOR play a dangerous game of allowing or accepting extremist networks and terrorist facilitators to operate from or through their territory, believing that their own people and governments will be immune from the threat. Efforts designed to develop or acquire WMD and delivery systems magnify the potential dangers of the marriage between some states and their extremist proxies. Indeed, the acquisition of WMD by hostile states or terrorist organizations would constitute a grave threat to the United States, our allies, and the countries of the region, and it likely would spark a destabilizing arms race. In the near term, the greatest potential for such a threat to arise is found in the instability in South Asia and the activities and policies of the Iranian regime.

• Instability in Afghanistan and Pakistan. Pakistan and Afghanistan pose the most urgent problem set in the CENTCOM AOR. Destabilization of the nuclear-armed Pakistani state would present an enormous challenge to the United States, its allies, and our interests. Pakistani state failure would provide transnational terrorist groups and other extremist organizations an opportunity to acquire nuclear weapons and a safe haven from which to plan and launch attacks. The Pakistani state faces a rising – indeed, an existential – threat from Islamist extremists such as Al Qaeda and other transnational terrorists organizations, which have developed in safe havens and support bases in ungoverned spaces in the Afghanistan-Pakistan border regions. Nevertheless, many Pakistani leaders remain focused on India as Pakistan's principal threat, and some may even continue to regard Islamist extremist groups as a potential strategic asset against India. Meanwhile, Al Qaeda, the Taliban, and other insurgent groups operating from the border region are engaged in an increasingly violent campaign against Afghan and Coalition Forces and the developing

Afghan state.

• **Iranian Activities and Policies.** Iranian activities and policies constitute the major state-based threat to regional stability. Despite UN Security Council resolutions, international sanctions, and diplomatic efforts through the P5+1, Iran is assessed by many to be continuing its pursuit of a nuclear weapons capability, which would destabilize the region and likely spur a regional arms race. Iran employs surrogates and violent proxies to weaken competitor states, perpetuate conflict with Israel, gain regional influence, and obstruct the Middle East Peace Process. Iran also uses some of these groups to train and equip militants in direct conflict with US forces. Syria, Iran's key ally, facilitates the Iranian regime's reach into the Levant and the Arab world by serving as the key link in an Iran-Syria-Hizballah-Hamas alliance and allows extremists (albeit in smaller numbers than in the past) to operate in Damascus and to facilitate travel into Iraq.

The situation in Iraq, lingering Arab-Israeli tensions, and arms smuggling and piracy in the Gulf of Aden and off the Somali coast also pose significant challenges to the interests of the United States, its allies, and partners.

• **Iraq.** The situation in Iraq has improved significantly since the peak of violence in mid-2007, but the gains there remain fragile and reversible, though less so than last fall. In Iraq, a number of factors continue to pose serious risks to US interests and have the potential to undermine regional stability, international access to strategic resources, and efforts to deny terrorist safe havens and support bases. Internally, fundamental issues such as the distribution of political power and resources remain to be settled. The Iraqi state is still developing, and various issues pose serious impediments to development. Integration of the Sons of Iraq and the return of refugees and internally displaced Iraqis will strain governmental capacity. Externally, Iraq's position with its neighbors is still in flux, with some playing a negative role in Iraq. Ethnic and sectarian tensions persist, and if large-scale communal conflict were to return to Iraq, violence could "spill over" into other states. Such violence could also enable terrorist and insurgent groups to reestablish control over portions of the country, which would destabilize Iraq and the surrounding region. To further complicate matters, the decline in oil prices and the resulting cut in the Iraqi budget are likely to delay Iraqi Security Force modernization and security initiatives, programs for the revitalization of the oil and electricity sectors, and improvements in the provision of government services.

• **The Arab-Israeli conflict.** The enduring Arab-Israeli conflict presents distinct challenges to our ability to advance our interests in the AOR. Israeli-Palestinian tensions often flare into violence and large-scale armed confrontations. The conflict has created a deep reservoir of anti-American sentiment, based on the perception of US favoritism for Israel. Arab anger over the Palestinian question limits the strength and depth of US partnerships with governments and peoples in the AOR and threatens the continued viability of moderate regimes in the Arab world. Extremist groups exploit that anger to mobilize support. The conflict also gives Iran influence in the Arab world through its clients, Lebanese Hizballah and Hamas. The attention to this issue in recent months and the appointment of Senator Mitchell have generated positive reactions.

C. Other Challenges to Security and Stability

While this statement will describe in greater detail the dynamics and challenges in the sub-regions of the AOR, there are a number of cross-cutting issues that serve as major drivers of instability, inter-state tensions, and conflicts. These factors can serve as rootcauses of instability or as obstacles to security.

• **Extremist ideological movements and militant groups.** The CENTCOM AOR is home, of course, to important transnational terrorist networks and violent extremist organizations that exploit local conflicts and foster instability through the use of terrorismand indiscriminate violence. The most significant of these is Al Qaeda, which, along with its associated extremist groups, seeks to undermine regional governments, challenge US and western influence in the region, foster instability, and impose extremist, oppressive practices on the people through indiscriminate violence and intimidation.

• **Proliferation of WMD.** The AOR contains states and terrorists organizations which actively seek WMD capabilities and have previously proliferated WMD technology outside established international monitoring regimes.

• **Ungoverned, poorly governed, and alternatively governed spaces.** Weak civil and security institutions and the inability of certain governments in the region to exert full control over their territories are conditions extremists exploit to create physical safe havens in which they can plan, train for, and launch terrorist operations or pursue narco-criminal activities. Increasingly we are seeing the development of what might be termed sub-states, particularly in Lebanon, Pakistan, and the Palestinian territories, which are part of an extremist strategy to "hold" territory and challenge the legitimacy and authority of the central government.

• **Significant source of terrorist financing and facilitation.** The AOR, particularly the Arabian Peninsula, remains a prime source of funding and facilitation for global terrorist organizations. This terrorist financing is transmitted through a variety of formal and informal networks throughout the region.

• **Piracy.** The state collapse of Somalia has enabled the emergence of piracy in the Gulf of Aden and off the coast of Somalia. Since the August 2008 spike in piracy acts, we have worked in close cooperation with the international community to counter this trend by focusing on increasing international naval presence, assisting the shipping industry with improving defensive measures, and establishing a sound international legal framework for resolving piracy cases. With UNSC resolution authorities, over twenty countries have since deployed naval ships to conduct counter piracy operations in the Gulf of Aden. In January 2009, we stood up a Combined Task Force (CTF–151) for the specific purpose of conducting and coordinating counter piracy operations.

• **Ethnic, tribal, and sectarian rivalries.** Within certain countries, the politicization of ethnicity, tribal affiliation, and religious sect serves to disrupt the development of national civil institutions and social cohesion, at times to the point of violence. Between countries in

the region, such rivalries can heighten political tension and serve as catalysts for conflict and insurgency.

• Disputed borders and access to vital resources. Unresolved issues of border demarcation and disagreements over the sharing of vital resources, such as water, serve as sources of tension and conflict between and within states in the region.

• Weapons and narcotics trafficking. The trafficking and smuggling of weapons and narcotics and associated criminal activities undermine state security, spur corruption, and inhibit legitimate economic activity and good governance throughout the AOR.

• Uneven economic development and lack of employment opportunities. Despite substantial economic growth rates throughout much of the region over the past few years, significant segments of the population in the region remain economically disenfranchised, uneducated, and without sufficient opportunity. The recent economic downturn has heightened these problems. Without sustained, broad-based economic development, increased employment opportunities are unlikely given the growing proportions of young people relative to overall populations.

• Lack of regional and global economic integration. The AOR is characterized by low levels of trade and commerce between and among countries, which diminish prospects for long term economic growth, as well as opportunities to deepen interdependence through private sector, social, and political ties between countries.

III. Major Operating Concepts

A. Implementing Comprehensive Approaches and Strengthening Unity of Effort
Addressing the challenges and threats in the AOR requires a comprehensive, whole of government approach that fully integrates our military and non-military efforts and those of our allies and partners. This approach puts a premium on unity of effort at all levels and with all participants. At the combatant command level, this means working with our interagency and international partners to develop joint action or campaign plans that establish appropriate missions and objectives for our subordinate elements, frommajor commands such as Multi-National Force–Iraq (MNF-I) to country-based offices of military cooperation. To effectively carry out these plans, the military elements must be coordinated carefully with the corresponding State Department envoy or ambassador. CENTCOM also strives to help subordinate command efforts and to address areas and functions not assigned to subordinate units or that are cross-cutting, such as combating the flow of foreign fighters.

B. Nesting Counter-Terrorism within a Counter-Insurgency Approach
Success against the extremist networks in the CENTCOM AOR - whether in Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Yemen, Lebanon, or elsewhere - requires all forces and means at our disposal employed in a strategic approach grounded in the principles of counterinsurgency. Our counter-terror efforts, which seek to dismantle the extremist networks and their leadership, often through the use of military force, are critical.

However, it is also important to eliminate these networks' sources of support. Often this support comes from sympathetic populations who provide financial support and physical safe haven or who simply turn a blind eye to extremist activities. At other times, support comes from populations directly subjected to extremist intimidation and extortion. Eroding this support, eliminating these safe havens, and ultimately preventing networks from reconstituting themselves requires protecting populations, delegitimizing the terrorists' methods and ideologies, addressing legitimate grievances to win over reconcilable elements of the population, and promoting broad-based economic and governmental development. Defeating extremist groups thus requires the application of basic counter-insurgency concepts. We cannot be just "hard" or just "soft"—we must be both.

This does not imply, however, that US forces must conduct counter-insurgency operations everywhere in the AOR where there are extremist groups. Rather, this demands an approach in which the US primarily provides support to our partners in their own counter-terror and counter-insurgency efforts. We should help nations develop their own capacity to secure their people and to govern fairly and effectively, and we should build effective partnerships and engage with the people, leaders, and security forces in the AOR. Whichever forces are involved, ours or our partners', their actions and operations must adhere to basic counter-insurgency principles, with the specifics of the operations tailored to the circumstances on the ground.

C. Strengthening and Expanding the Regional Security Network
A new architecture for cooperative security is emerging in the region from what in the past has been a relatively loose collection of security relationships and bi-lateral programs. Conflicts in recent decades have demonstrated that previous security paradigms and architectures for the region, those which focused on balancing regional blocs of power or solely on combating terrorism, have been insufficient to ensure regional stability and security in the globalized, post-Cold War environment.

From these unsatisfactory paradigms, we are now seeing that a model characterized by a focus on common interests, inclusivity, and capacity-building can best advance security and stability in the region. This network of cooperation is both effective and sustainable because it creates synergies and, as it grows, strengthens relationships. Each cooperative endeavor is a link connecting countries in the region, and each adds to the collective strength of the network. The mechanisms put in place to coordinate efforts in one area, such as piracy, smuggling, or littoral security, can often be leveraged to generate action in other areas, such as a rapid response to a major oil spill in the Gulf or in the aftermath of a typhoon or earthquake. Moreover, progress made in generating cooperation in a set of issues can serve as an opening for engagement on other issues, thereby promoting greater interdependence. As a result, a growing network not only works to improve interoperability and overall effectiveness in providing security; it also builds trust andconfidence among neighbors and partners.

The foundation of this network consists of a focus on common interests, an atmosphere of inclusivity, and efforts to build security capacity and infrastructure.

• Common interests. The security challenges we face together can be a unifying force for focusing regional attention and increasing cooperation. We all have an interest in preventing terrorism, reducing illegal drug production and trafficking, responding to environmental disasters, halting the proliferation of WMD and related technology, countering piracy, and deterring aggression. However, no nation can protect itself fromthese threats without cooperation from others. Collective action and comprehensive approaches are required to address these issues. Therefore, nations must work to build the trust and confidence required to pursue these common interests.

• Inclusivity. An atmosphere of broad inclusivity expands the pool of resources for security issues and allows partnerships to leverage each country's comparative advantages, from expertise and facilities to information or even geography. The network is not an alliance or bloc, and countries link into this network to address issues as they desire. This suggests that there may be room for cooperation between countries inside and outside the region and even some who may have been seen as competitors. Security initiatives start out as bilateral partnerships and then expand to multilateral ones as cooperation improves. Ultimately, broad participation in the network is an important means to promote security and stability in the region.

• Capacity building. Improving the overall effectiveness of our security efforts requires strengthening each country's ability to maintain security inside its own borders and to participate in joint endeavors. This capacity building includes collective and individual training programs, educational exchanges, and the development of security-related facilities and infrastructure, as well as equipment modernization efforts. These programs benefit from the talents and resources each partner brings to the network, and they can be tailored to the nature of each country's participation. In addition to military programs, this also will require increasing the civilian capacity in the Department of State and the US Agency for International Development.

Already, there is great breadth and depth to the cooperative activity that is underway, and there is more design and coherence to this network than is commonly understood. In addition to our ongoing partnerships with the Iraqi Security Forces and the Afghan National Security Forces, numerous multilateral counter-terrorism, maritime, and coastal security initiatives are ongoing in the region. Additionally, many countries participate in an extensive array of combined ground, maritime, aviation, and special operations exercises, each designed to respond to different types of threats. There are partnerships in the region for improving coordination and information sharing through, for example, air and missile defense initiatives with several Gulf countries and border cooperation programs with Afghanistan and Pakistan. Lastly, many countries are working together to fund or provide military equipment to underdeveloped security forces, with our own Foreign Military Sales (FMS) and Foreign Military Funding (FMF) programs playing a large role in these efforts.

IV. Critical Sub-regions in the CENTCOM AOR
The complexity and uniqueness of local conditions in the CENTCOM AOR defy attempts to formulate an aggregated estimate of the situation that can address, with complete satisfaction, all of the pertinent issues. The boundaries of the AOR are a US organizational

construct that does not encompass a cohesive social, cultural, political, and economic region. Thus, the best way to approach the challenges in the AOR is through a disaggregation of the problem sets into six sub-regions, described as follows: • Afghanistan, Pakistan, and India (though India is not within the boundaries of the CENTCOM AOR)• Iran• Iraq• The Arabian Peninsula, comprised of Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, the UAE, Oman, and Yemen • Egypt and the Levant, comprised of Syria, Lebanon, and Jordan (as well as Israel and the Palestinian territories which are not within the CENTCOM AOR) • Central Asia, comprised of Turkmenistan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, and Kazakhstan

A. Afghanistan and Pakistan The United States has a vital national security interest in the stability ofAfghanistan and Pakistan. Afghanistan and Pakistan pose the most urgent problem set in the CENTCOM area of responsibility. The Taliban and other insurgent groups are growing in strength and waging an increasingly violent campaign against Coalition Forces and the Afghan state.

Pakistan, too, faces an existential threat from Islamist extremist groups such as Al Qaeda and Lashkar-e-Tayyiba, which enjoy the benefit of safe havens and support bases in Pakistan, particularly in the rugged region along the Afghanistan-Pakistan border. Additionally, the possibility, however remote, of serious instability in a nuclear-armed Pakistan would pose a serious danger to the United States, its allies, and its interests.

Reversing the cycle of violence, defeating the extremist insurgencies in these countries, and eliminating safe havens for Al Qaeda and other trans-national extremist organizations require a sustained, substantial commitment. Afghanistan and Pakistan have unique internal dynamics and problems, but the two are linked by tribal affiliationsand a porous border that permits terrorists and insurgents to move relatively freely to and from their safe havens. Although our presence, activities, and rules of engagement differ on each side of the Durand Line, Afghanistan and Pakistan represent a single theater of operations that requires complementary and integrated civil-military, whole ofgovernment, approaches.

In accordance with the Administration's new strategy for Afghanistan and Pakistan, we are substantially increasing our forces in Afghanistan. However it is important to note that military forces are necessary but, by themselves, are not sufficient to achieve our objectives. We will foster comprehensive approaches by ensuring ourmilitary efforts reinforce US policy goals and are fully integrated with broader diplomatic and development efforts. In fact, it is critical that the complementary efforts of other departments and agencies receive the necessary support, manning, and other resources. The United States must have robust and substantial civilian capacity to effectively complement our military efforts.

Afghanistan
In parts of Afghanistan, the situation is deteriorating. The Afghan insurgency has expanded its strength and influence – particularly in the south and east – and the 2009 levels of violence are significantly higher than those of last year. The Taliban have been resilient, and their activities are fueled by revenues from narcotics-trafficking, the freedom

of moment they enjoy in the border region between Afghanistan and Pakistan, and the ineffective governance and services in parts of the country, as well as by contributions from groups outside the Afghanistan/Pakistan area. Indeed, insurgent successes correlate directly to the Afghan people's growing disenchantment with their government due to its incapacity to serve the population and due to their doubts regarding the competence and honesty of public officials.

In order to address the situation in Afghanistan, we will implement a comprehensive counter-insurgency approach that works to defeat existing insurgent groups, develops the institutions required to address the root causes of the conflict, maintains relentless pressure on terrorist organizations affiliated with the insurgency, dismantles illegal drug networks, and prevents the emergence of safe havens for those transnational extremist groups.

This campaign has several components, but first and foremost is a commitment to protecting and serving the people. We and our Afghan partners must focus on securing the Afghan people and building their trust. As part of this focus, we will take a residential approach and, in a culturally acceptable way, live among the people, understand their neighborhoods, and invest in relationships. The recent commitment of additional forces by the President will allow us to implement this strategy more effectively, because we will be able to expand the security presence further into the provinces and villages. With these additional forces we will be better able to hold areas cleared of insurgent groups and to build a new level of Afghan governmental control. We recognize the sacrifices of the Afghan people over the past decades, and we will continue working to build the trust of the people and, with security, to provide them with new opportunities.

As a part of this approach, we will also invigorate efforts to develop the capabilities of the Afghanistan National Security Force, including the Afghan National Army, the Afghan Police, the Afghan National Civil Order Police, the Afghan Border Forces, specialized counter narcotics units, and other security forces. We recognize the fact that international forces must eventually transfer security responsibility to Afghan security forces. To do this we must significantly expand the size and capacity of the Afghan forces so they are more able to meet their country's security needs. A properly sized, trained, and equipped Afghanistan National Security Force is a prerequisite for any eventual drawdown of international forces from Afghanistan.

In addition, we will bolster the capabilities and the legitimacy of the other elements of the Afghan government – an effort in which, in much of Afghanistan, we will be building not rebuilding. We will do this through our support to the Provincial Reconstruction Teams and through civil-military and ministerial capacity building efforts,empowering Afghans to solve Afghan problems and promoting local reconciliation where possible. Moreover, we will support the Afghan government and help provide security for the Presidential elections later this year to ensure those elections are free, fair, and legitimate in the eyes of the Afghan people.

Another major component of our strategy is to disrupt narcotics trafficking, which has provided significant funding to the Taliban insurgency. This drug money has been the

"oxygen in the air" that allows these groups to operate. With the recent extension ofauthority granted to US forces to conduct counter-narcotics operations, we are better able to work with the Afghan government more closely to eradicate illicit crops, shut down drug labs, and disrupt trafficking networks. To complement these efforts, we will alsopromote viable agricultural alternatives, build Afghan law enforcement capacity, and develop the infrastructure to help Afghan farmers get their products to market. Executing this strategy will require clear unity of effort at all levels and with all participants. Our senior commanders in Afghanistan will be closely linked with Ambassador Holbrooke, the US Ambassador to Afghanistan, and the Afghan leadership.

Our security efforts will be integrated into the broader plan to promote political and economic development, with our security activities supporting these other efforts. Additionally, we will continue to work with our coalition partners and allies to achieveprogress, in part by refining our command and control structures to coordinate more effectively the actions of US forces working for NATO ISAF and with Afghan forces. These cooperative relationships have proven extremely helpful, and we have benefitted from the Central Asian States' recognition of the importance of international success in Afghanistan and their granting us overflight and transit rights to support our operations there.

Pakistan
Pakistan is facing its own insurgency from militants and extremists operating from the country's tribal areas. As in Afghanistan, violent incidents in Pakistan, particularly bombings and suicide attacks, have increased over the past three years. Most of these have targeted security personnel and government officials, but some have intended a more public impact, as we saw with the tragic assassination of Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto and the more recent attacks in Mumbai. In response to this extremist activity, the Pakistani military has stepped up operations against militants in parts of the tribal areas, expanding a campaign that the Pakistani military has been prosecuting against extremists for more than seven years. The Pakistani military has sacrificed much during this campaign, and we will support their efforts in two ways.

First, we will expand our partnership with the Pakistani military and Frontier Corps. We will provide increased US military assistance for helicopters to provide airmobility, night vision equipment, and training and equipment - specifically for Pakistani Special Operations Forces and their Frontier Corps to make them a more effective counter-insurgency force. We will also expand our outreach and exchange programs to build stronger relationships with the Pakistani leadership.

Second, we will help promote cooperation across the Afghanistan-Pakistan border by providing training, equipment, facilities, and intelligence. These efforts will promote sharing of timely intelligence information, help to deconflict and coordinate security operations on both sides of the border, and limit the flow of extremists between Afghanistan and Pakistan.

Within the counter-insurgency construct we have laid out for Afghanistan and Pakistan,

we will of course continue to target, disrupt, and pursue the leadership, bases, and support networks of Al Qaeda and other transnational extremist groups operating in the region. We will do this aggressively and relentlessly. We will also help our partners work to prevent networks from reconstituting themselves, assisting them with delegitimizing the terrorists' methods and their ideology, addressing legitimate grievances to win over reconcilable elements of the population, and promoting broad-based economic and governmental development.

B. Iran

The Iranian regime pursues its foreign policies in ways that contribute to insecurity and frustrate US goals in the CENTCOM AOR. It continues to insert itself into the Israeli-Palestinian situation by provide material, financial, and political support to Hamas and Hizballah; it remains in violation of three UN Security Council Resolutions regarding its nuclear program; and it still provides arms and training to militias and insurgents in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Iran continues to use Hizballah as a proxy to assert its influence in the region and to undermine the prospects for peace in the Levant. Despite Hizballah's participation in the government, the group continues to undermine the Lebanese state's authority and remains a threat to Israel. Hizballah's military support from Iran moves mainly through Syria, and thus is dependent on a continuation of the Syria-Iran alliance.

Iran's nuclear program is widely believed to be a part of the regime's broader effort to expand its influence in the region. Although the regime has stated that the purpose of its nuclear program is for peaceful, civilian use, Iranian officials have consistently failed to provide the assurances and transparency necessary for international acceptance and for the verification required by the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, to which Iran is a signatory. The regime's obstinacy and obfuscation have forced Iran's neighbors and the international community to conclude the worst about the regime's intentions. As a result, other regional powers have announced their intentions to develop nuclear programs. This poses a clear challenge to international non-proliferation interests, in particular due to the potential threat of such technologies being transferred to extremist groups. Moreover, the Israeli government may ultimately see itself so threatened by the prospect of an Iranian nuclear weapon that it would take preemptive military action to derail or delay it.

The Iranian regime has also attempted to thwart US and international efforts to bring stability to Iraq and Afghanistan. In Afghanistan, Iran appears to have hedged its longstanding public support for the Karzai government by providing opportunistic support to the Taliban. In Iraq, however, the Iranian regime has experienced a recent setback. Iraqi and Coalition forces have succeeded in degrading Iranian proxies operating in southern Iraq, and, during January's provincial elections, the Iraqi people voiced a broad rejection of Iranian influence in Iraqi politics.

Pursuing our longstanding regional goals and improving key relationships within and outside the AOR help to limit the negative impact of Iran's policies. A credible US effort on Arab-Israeli issues that provides regional governments and populations a way to achieve a

comprehensive settlement of the disputes would undercut the idea of militant "resistance," which the Iranian regime and extremists organizations have been free to exploit. Additionally, progress on the Syrian track of the peace process could disrupt Iran's lines of support to Hamas and Hizballah. Moreover, our cooperative efforts with the Arab Gulf states, which include hardening and protecting their critical infrastructureand developing a regional network of air and missile defense systems, can help dissuade aggressive Iranian behavior. In all of these initiatives, our military activities will support our broader diplomatic efforts.

C. Iraq

The situation in Iraq has improved dramatically in the past year. Where security incidents once averaged well over 1,500 per week in the early summer of 2007 when sectarian violence raged at its peak, there have been less than 150 incidents per week for the past five months, including criminal violence. These improvements in security and the increasing capabilities of the Iraqi Security Forces have allowed for a drawdown to fourteen Brigade Combat Teams, with two more to be reduced this year along with thousands of "enabler" forces. And we remain on track to end our combat mission in Iraq by the end of August 2010.

After almost six years of war, the fundamental causes of instability and violence have diminished, and they are now kept largely in check by a number of factors. The security effort in Iraq has put an end to large-scale violence, while increasingly capable and trusted Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) have taken on an expanded role. The Iraqi government's moves toward reconciliation have helped lessen some of the tensions in Iraq's communal struggle for power and resources, as formerly warring groups have turned increasingly to political participation rather than violence as a means of achieving their goals. Moreover, the results of the January 2009 provincial elections indicate a rejection of the Islamist parties seen as the most under the influence of Iran.

Though the trends in Iraq have been largely positive, progress has been uneven, and the situation still remains fragile and reversible. A return to violence remains an option for those who have set aside their arms. Enemy organizations, especially Al Qaeda in Iraq (AQI) and Iranian-backed Shi'a extremist groups, remain committed to narrow sectarian agendas and the expulsion of US influence from Iraq. These enemy organizations will undoubtedly attempt to disrupt or derail several key events during the next year, including the national elections scheduled for December. However, the most difficult and potentially violent problem may be the Arab-Kurd-Turkmen competition in disputed Iraqi territories. Beginning this spring, Iraqis will take up the long-deferred, contentious question of Iraq's internal boundaries, which has fundamental implications for the role of the Kurds in the future Iraqi state and for the likelihood of Sunni Arab and Turkmen insurgent groups returning to large-scale violence.

The central questions for the United States as these events develop are how to help the Iraqis preserve hard-won security gains as US forces withdraw and how to further develop US-Iraq relations that best enable regional stability. The fact that the 2009 Provincial elections were conducted successfully showed that the checks and balances of the Iraqi

constitution and professionalism of the ISF act as a brake upon any party's ambitions to control the Iraqi state. However, the Iraqi government has much work to do to develop the essential services the Iraqi people expect and to perform the functions necessary to achieve full support over time. The Iraqi government in 2009-2010 will be under great popular pressure as the Iraqi electorate's expectations will be high after electing new provincial and national governments.

US forces and Provincial Reconstruction Teams are still an element that helps hold the security, governance, and development effort together. In some areas, US military and civilian officials are still important mediators in local conflicts or disputes and key interlocutors between local communities and higher levels of the Iraqi government. Prior to disengaging from those roles, US forces and civilian officials must ensure certain conditions prevail, including: • A security force capable of coping with current and intensified enemy action • An Iraqi government capable of meeting basic needs and expectations and delivering services on a nonsectarian, non-ethnic basis • Adequate rule of law and sufficiently stable civil institutions

D. The Arabian Peninsula
The Arabian Peninsula commands significant US attention and focus because of its importance to our interests and the potential for insecurity. These Arab states on the Peninsula are the nations of the AOR most politically and commercially connected to the US and Europe. They are more developed economically and collectively wield defense forces far larger than any of their neighbors, and they are major providers of the world's energy resources. However, many Gulf Arabs suffer from degrees of disenfranchisement and economic inequity, and some areas of the Peninsula contain extremist sentiment and proselytizing. As a result, the Peninsula has been a significant source of funding and manpower for extremist groups and foreign fighters. These internal troubles are often aggravated and intensified by external factors, such as the Iranian regime's destabilizing behavior, instability in the Palestinian territories and southern Lebanon, the conflict in Iraq, and weapons proliferation.

Because of the Peninsula's importance and its numerous common security challenges, the countries of the Arabian Peninsula are key partners in the developing regional security network described above. CENTCOM ground, air, maritime, and special operations forces participate in numerous operations and training events, bilateral and multilateral, with our partners from the Peninsula. We help develop indigenous capabilities for counter terrorism; border, maritime, and critical infrastructure security; and deterring Iranian aggression. As a part of all this, our FMS and FMF programs are helping to improve the capabilities and interoperability of our partners' forces. We are also working toward an integrated air and missile defense network for the Gulf. All of these cooperative efforts are facilitated by the critical base and port facilities that Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar, the UAE, and others provide for US forces.

Yemen stands out from its neighbors on the Peninsula. The inability of the Yemeni government to secure and exercise control over all of its territory offers terrorist and insurgent groups in the region, particularly Al Qaeda, a safe haven in which to plan,

organize, and support terrorist operations. It is important that this problem be addressed, and CENTCOM is working to do that. Were extremist cells in Yemen to grow, Yemen's strategic location would facilitate terrorist freedom of movement in the region and allow terrorist organizations to threaten Yemen's neighbors, especially Saudi Arabia and the other Gulf States. In view of this, we are expanding our security cooperation efforts with Yemen to help build the nation's security, counter-insurgency, and counter-terror capabilities.

E. Egypt and the Levant

The Levant and Egypt sub-region is the traditional political, social, and intellectual heart of the Arab world and has historically been the primary battleground between rival ideologies. The dynamics of this sub-region, particularly with regard to Israel and extremist organizations, have a significant impact on the internal and external politics of states outside the region as well. In addition, US policy and actions in the Levant affect the strength of our relationships with partners in the AOR. As such, progress toward resolving the political disputes in the Levant, not to mention the prevention of conflict, is a major concern for CENTCOM.

Egypt remains a leading Arab state, a stabilizing influence in the Middle East, and a key actor in the Middle East Peace Process. In recent years, however, the Egyptian government has had to deal with serious economic challenges and an internal extremist threat; as such, US foreign aid has been a critical reinforcement to the Egyptian government. At the same time, Egypt has played a pivotal role in the international effort to address worsening instability in Gaza. CENTCOM continues to work closely with the Egyptian security forces to interdict illicit arms shipments to extremists in Gaza and to prevent the spread of Gaza's instability into Egypt and beyond.

In Lebanon, Lebanese Hizballah continues to undermine security throughout the Levant by undermining the authority of the Lebanese government, threatening Israel, and providing training and support to extremist groups outside Lebanon. Syria and Iran continue to violate UN Security Council resolutions and provide support to Hizballah - support which allowed Hizballah to instigate and wage a war against Israel in 2006 and reconstitute its armaments afterward. Stabilizing Lebanon requires ending Syria and Iran's illegal support to Hizballah, building the capabilities of the Lebanese Armed Forces, and assisting the Lebanese government in developing a comprehensive national defense strategy through which the government can exercise its sovereignty, free of interventions from Hizballah, Syria, and Iran.

The al-Asad regime in Syria continues to play the dangerous game of allowing or accepting extremist networks and terrorist facilitators to operate from and through Syrian territory, believing incorrectly that their people and government will be immune from the threat. Whether hosting Hamas leadership, supporting the shipment of armaments to Hizballah, or cooperating with AQI operatives, the al-Asad regime has used its support for its neighbors' opposition movements as strategic leverage. However, unlike Iran, Syria's motives probably stem from short-sighted calculations rather than ideology. It is possible that over time Syria could emerge as a partner in promoting security in the Levant and in

the region.

Jordan continues to be a key partner and to play a positive role in the region. Jordan participates in many regional security initiatives and has placed itself at the forefront of police and military training for regional security forces. In addition to its regular participation in multi-lateral training exercises, Jordan promotes regional cooperation and builds partner security capacity through its King Abdullah Special Operations Training Center, Peace Operations Training Center, International PoliceTraining Center, and Cooperative Management Center. These efforts will likely prove critical in the continued development of legitimate security forces in Lebanon and the Palestinian territories and, as a consequence, in the long-term viability of the peace process.

Through capacity building programs, joint and combined training exercises, information sharing, and other engagement opportunities, we will work with our partners in Egypt and the Levant to build the capabilities of legitimate security forces, defeat extremist networks and sub-state militant groups, and disrupt illegal arms smuggling. In addition, we will work to develop the mechanisms of security and confidence building to support the Middle East Peace Process.

F. Central Asia
Though Central Asia has received relatively less attention than other sub-regions in the AOR, the US maintains a strong interest in establishing long-term, cooperative relationships with the Central Asian countries and other major regional powers to create a positive security environment. Central Asia constitutes a pivotal location on the Eurasian continent between Russia, China, and South Asia; it thus serves as a major transit route for regional and international commerce and for supplies supporting Coalition efforts in Afghanistan. Ensuring stability in Central Asia requires abandoning the outdated, zero-sum paradigms of international politics associated with the so-called "Great Game," as well as adoption cooperative approaches to combat the common enemies of extremism and illegal narcotics trafficking. The United States, Russia, and China need not court or coerce the Central Asian governments at the expense of one another. Instead, there are numerous opportunities for cooperation to advance the interests of the all parties involved. However, public and civic institutions in Central Asia are still developing after decades of Soviet rule, and they present challenges to efforts to promote security, development, and cooperation. Although there is interdependence across a broad range of social, economic, and security matters, these nations have not yet established a productive regional modus vivendi. Overcoming these challenges requires gradual, incremental approaches that focus on the alleviation of near-term needs, better governance, the integration of markets for energy and other commercial activity, and grass-roots economic development.

As a part of a broader US effort to promote development and build partnerships in Central Asia, CENTCOM works to build the capabilities of indigenous security forces as well as the mechanisms for regional cooperation. Besides providing training, equipment, and facilities for various Army, National Guard, and border security forces through our Building Partnership Capacity programs, we also work with the national level organizations to facilitate dialogue on security and emergency response issues. For example, in February

2008 and again this past March, CENTCOM hosted Conferences for the Chiefs of Defense from the Central Asian States to discuss regional security issues. CENTCOM also co-hosts the annual Regional Cooperation Exercise, which is designed to improve regional coordination on issues such as counter-terrorism and security and humanitarian crisis response.

CENTCOM is also working to ensure continued access to Afghanistan through Central Asia. With great support from the US Transportation Command, we have established a Northern Distribution Network through several Central Asian States to help reduce costs of transporting non-military supplies to support NATO, US, and Afghan security operations, while decreasing our exposure to risks associated with our supply lines running through Pakistan. On a related note, we are also pursuing alternatives to the use of Manas Air Base in Kyrgyzstan. A decision by the Krygyz government to restrict US and Allied access to the base would be disappointing but would not constitute a serious impediment to Coalition operations in Afghanistan.

V. Critical Mission Enablers
Success in our ongoing missions and maintaining a credible, responsive contingency capacity in the AOR require the support of several key mission enablers. The impacts of these capabilities range from the tactical to the strategic, and CENTCOM fully supports their continuation, expansion, and improvement.

A. Building Partnership Capacity (BPC)
Our security cooperation and security assistance efforts are critical to improving security and stability in the region. They help strengthen our relationships and build the security capabilities of our partners in the AOR. Increases to global train and equip resources, coalition support funds, and the State Department's foreign military sales (FMS) and counternarcotics security assistance and reimbursements programs are essential in generating comprehensive and cooperative solutions to defeat insurgent and extremist groups. Foreign Military Financing (FMF) and FMS remain our mainstay security assistance tools and are reasonably successful in meeting needs in a peacetime environment. The International Military Education and Training program is also an important contributor to developing partner nation capabilities and enduring ties. However, in the face of enduring, persistent irregular warfare, we look to expanded special authorities and multi-year appropriations to quickly meet the emerging needs ofcounterterrorism, counterinsurgency, and Foreign Internal Defense operations. Multi-year programs of record that provide training, equipment, and infrastructure for our partner security forces enabled our successes in Iraq and are of prime importance if we are to achieve comparable progress in Pakistan, Afghanistan, Lebanon, and Yemen.

B. Commander's Emergency Response Program (CERP)
CERP continues to be a vital counter-insurgency tool for our commanders in Afghanistan and Iraq. Small CERP projects can be the most efficient and effective means to address a local community's needs, and where security is lacking, it is often the only immediate means for addressing those needs. CERP spending is not intended to replace USAID-sponsored projects but rather to complement and potentially serve as a catalyst for these

projects. For this reason, CENTCOM fully supports expanded CERP authorities for its use in other parts of the CENTCOM AOR. CENTCOM has established control mechanisms that exceed those mandated by Congress, to include having the Army Audit Agency review programs in Iraq and a command review to ensure CERP funds projects that advance US goals and are of the most benefit to the targeted populations in Iraq and Afghanistan. We will continue to seek innovative mechanismsand authorities to create similar counter-insurgency tools for use by coalition and host nation partners. These tools should allow for a variety of funding sources, to include contributions from Non-Governmental Organizations, International Government Organizations, and partner governments.

C. Adaptable Command, Control, and Communications Systems

Continued operations across a dispersed AOR call for a robust, interoperable, high-volume Theater Command, Control, Communications, and Computers Infrastructure. CENTCOM currently utilizes available bandwidth to capacity, and theater fiber networks are vulnerable to single points of failure in the global information grid. Military Satellite Communications capabilities are critical to theater operations, and the acceleration of transformational upgrades to these systems would reduce our reliance on commercial providers.

We aggressively pursue means to extend Joint Theater Expeditionary Command, Control, and Communications support and services to disadvantaged users throughout the AOR. Some of these include Radio over Internet Protocol Routed Network, which provides critical radio retransmission services to remote users on the move; the Joint Airborne Communications System, which provides a flexible aerial platform-based radio retransmission solution that can be shifted to extend services to disadvantaged users; and the Distributed Tactical Communications System, which leverages new technologies to deliver reliable, critical communications capabilities to the most remote users. Overall, we require a fully integrated space and terrestrial communications network and infrastructure that support all Joint and potential partner nation users.

D. Intelligence and ISR

We continue to refine our techniques, procedures, and systems to optimize our Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance (ISR) efforts and to improve our battlespace awareness, seeking greater specificity, detail, and timeliness of intelligence whenever possible.

We aggressively seek out ways to execute the entire Find, Fix, Finish, Exploit, Analyze, and Disseminate intelligence cycle. However, this requires improved imagery intelligence, wide area coverage, sensor integration, signals intelligence, moving target indicators, layered ISR architecture and management tools, biometrics, counterintelligence, and human collectors. In particular, the acceleration of ISR Unmanned Aerial Systems procurement is crucial to our success. There is also a requirement for greater sea-based ISR. CENTCOM also supports DoD's planned growth in intelligence specialists, interrogators, counterintelligence, and human intelligence personnel capabilities. Moreover, we have learned the critical importance of a host of other specialized capabilities that have been developed outside traditional military specialties, such as terrorist threat finance analysts, human terrain teams, and document exploitation specialists.

E. Joint and Multinational Logistics

The primary focus of our logistics efforts is the timely deployment, equipping, and sustainment of units engaged in combat operations. Working with our multinational partners, we have instituted an efficient and effective logistics architecture that supports our forces and operations, while constantly reducing costs. Our logistics posture consists of pre-positioned inventories, strategic air and sealift capabilities, and access to bases with critical infrastructure, all of which are key logistics components that support operational flexibility. Our logistics processes center on the Global Combat Support System–Joint portal, which provides a theater level logistics common operational picture and supports theater-wide logistics unity of effort.

A significant asset recently added to CENTCOM's logistics capabilities has been the Joint Contracting Command for Iraq and Afghanistan, which supports CENTCOM,MNF-I, and USFOR-A by providing responsive contracting of supplies, services, and construction, and which also supports capacity building efforts within Iraqi and Afghan Ministries. The Joint Contracting Command recently established the infrastructure totransition from a manual to an automated contract writing system and to a Standard Procurement System across Iraq and Afghanistan. As a result, in FY2008, the Joint Contracting Command-Iraq/Afghanistan was able to execute over 41,000 contract actions and obligate a total of $7.5B, and over 45% of this funding went to Iraqi and Afghan firms. The Joint Contracting Command also teams with Task Force Business Stability Operations (TFBSO) and provides contracting support executing Congressional resources to revitalize Iraqi State Owned Enterprises. We estimate that TFBSO's $100M total in FY07 and FY08 revitalization efforts generated employment for 24,500 Iraqis. Our logisticians are also focusing on other key initiatives supporting our forces and operations, while minimizing costs. We are now moving an increasing amount of non-military supplies into Afghanistan via a Northern Distribution Network across the Central Asian States, with the cooperation of Russia and other European participants. As mentioned above. these new lines of communication (LOCs) will help reduce costs while decreasing our exposure to risks associated with our supply lines running through Pakistan. Reliance on these LOCs will be further reduced by our Afghan First initiative, which increases our use of Afghan producers and vendors for products such as bottled water.

F. Force Protection and Countering Improvised Explosive Device (IEDs)

Initiatives focused on countering the threat of IEDs are of paramount importance to our operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. IEDs continue to be the number-one threat to ground forces, and efforts to expedite the fielding of personal protective equipment, IED jammers, route clearance vehicles and equipment, and most recently, the Mine Resistant Ambush Protected vehicle (MRAP) have saved countless lives. Because of the MRAP's importance, we have more than tripled our MRAP fielding capacity and more than doubled the number of MRAPs in Afghanistan over the past eight months. Because we expect IEDs to remain a key weapon in the arsenals of terrorists and insurgents for years to come, CENTCOM urges continued support for the Joint IED Defeat Organization; the Services' baseline sustainment for MRAPs, base defense initiatives, and C-IED efforts; and Research, Development, Test, and Experimentation funding and procurement to counter IED tactics

and networks.

G. Overseas Basing and Theater Posture
CENTCOM's overseas basing strategy and its associated overseas military construction projects at OSD-approved Forward Operating Sites and Cooperative Security Locations are developing the infrastructure necessary for global access, projection, sustainment, and protection of our combined forces in the AOR. Fully functional sites are essential to our ability to conduct the full spectrum of military operations, engage with and enable partner nations, and act promptly and decisively. Pre-positioned stocks and reset equipment provide critical support to this strategy but require reconstitution and modernization after having been partially expended to support operations in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Even with Global War on Terror budgets, military construction timelines are too long to respond to changes in a combat environment. Major events such as the approval of the Strategic Partnership Agreement with Iraq and the recent decision to send additional forces to Afghanistan show how rapidly basing requirements can change. Expanded Contingency Construction Authorities made available across the entire CENTCOM AOR can serve as partial, interim solutions because they push construction decision-making authority to our engaged commanders in the field. Increasing the Operations and Maintenance construction threshold for minor construction in support of combat operations across the AOR would also increase the ability of our commanders to quickly meet mission requirements and fully support and protect our deployed forces.

H. Adaptive Requirements, Acquisition, and Technology Processes
The Joint Rapid Acquisition Cell (JRAC) has proven important to addressing non-counter-IED rapid acquisition needs for our operations, and we will continue to use the Joint Urgent Operational Needs (JUON) process to support our warfighters. However, because the JUON process requires execution year reprogramming by the Services, we found in the past that the Rapid Acquisition Fund (RAF) was a useful JRAC tool for supporting immediate needs. When the authority existed, the JRAC used the RAF to field capabilities such as radio systems used for Afghanistan-Pakistan cross-border communications, which were procured in less than four months from the initial identification of the need. The JRAC has also used RAF funding to initiate the fieldingof critical biometrics equipment until the JUON process could further source the program,significantly reducing the time required to deploying the technology. Reinstating RAF funding and using it as a complement to the JUON process would allow CENTCOM to more quickly resolve warfighter needs. In addition to the JUON process, CENTCOM leverages Department of Defense programs like Joint Capability Technology Demonstrations (JCTD) to rapidly field capability for the warfighter. Unmanned Aerial Vehicles, intelligence collection and analysis tools, and limited collateral damage weapons are examples of recent JCTD successes.

Additionally, DoD currently has authority to spend up to $500,000 in Operations and Maintenance funds for procurement investment line items to meet the operational requirements of a Combatant Command engaged in contingency operations overseas. Our immediate mission requirements frequently call for equipment which exceeds this cost

threshold, such as water filtration equipment, generators, information technology/fusion systems, and heavy lift equipment. An increase of this threshold and a delegation of authority down to at least the theater level would allow commanders to address critical equipment shortfalls using commercially available systems, which in many cases are essential for mission accomplishment.

I. Personnel

Having sufficient and appropriate personnel for our commands and Joint Task Forces (JTFs) is critical to accomplishing our assigned missions and achieving our theater objectives. This is true at both the operational and strategic levels. Our headquarters require permanent, rather than augmentation, manpower for our enduring missions, as well as mechanisms for quickly generating temporary manpower for contingency operations. At the unit level, there continue to be shortfalls in many skill categories and enabling force structures that are low density and high demand. Intelligence specialists, counterintelligence and human intelligence collectors, interrogators, document exploitation specialists, detainee operations specialists, engineers, and military police are just a few of the enablers needed in greater number for current and future operations. As operations continue in Afghanistan, we also see critical need for Public Affairs and Information Operations personnel to improve our Strategic Communications capabilities. Similarly, as we draw down combat forces from Iraq, we will need enablers beyond the typical high-density/low-demand organizations, including such elements as leaders to augment advisory assistance brigades, counter-terrorist threat finance cells, and critical logistics units. At the same time, I would also request that Congress recognize the vital importance of increasing civilian capacity, particularly in the Department of State and the US Agency for International Development.

Quality of life, family support, and retention programs remain vital to our operations in the AOR. The Rest and Recuperation program continues to be a success, having served more than 135,000 troopers in 2008 and over 710,000 since its inception in September 2003. We also depend heavily on entitlement programs such as Combat Zone Tax Relief, Imminent Danger Pay, and Special Leave Accrual for deployed service members.

VI. Conclusion

There are currently over 215,000 Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Marines, and Coast Guardsmen serving in the CENTCOM region. Together with our many civilian partners, they have been the central element in the progress we have made in Iraq and several other areas, and they will be the key to achieving progress in Afghanistan and Pakistan and the other locations where serious work is being done. These wonderful Americans and their fellow troopers around the world constitute the most capable military in the history of our Nation. They have soldiered magnificently against tough enemies during challenging operations in punishing terrain and extreme weather. And they and their families havemade great sacrifices since 9/11.

Nothing means more to these great Americans than the sense that those back home appreciate their service and sacrifice.

In view of that, I want to conclude by thanking the American people for their extraordinary support of our military men and women and their families–and by thanking the members of this committee for your unflagging support and abiding concern for our troopers and their families as well.